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**Assembly
California
Legislature**



AUDRA STRICKLAND
ASSEMBLYWOMAN, THIRTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT

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The Federal Receiver, J. Clark Kelso, filed a motion this morning in the United States District Court, Northern District of California, seeking an order to ensure full state funding for the Receiver's \$8 billion Capital Construction Program, which currently includes the construction of a 1,500 bed maximum level security prison hospital in Camarillo.

The Receiver requested an additional \$1 billion over his previous request of \$7 billion. Mr. Kelso stated the additional funds will be used to upgrade the 33 California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation facilities with additional dental and mental health care services.

According to Mr. Kelso, the motion was filed for two main reasons. First, he believes he will run out of money as early as October. Second, he feels the Controller, Governor, and Legislature are not cooperating with him in implementing the court-ordered medical and mental health reform for California's prison population. For these reasons, Mr. Kelso is seeking guaranteed payment to prevent a delay in his construction projects.

The motion calls for the defendants, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Controller John Chiang, to be held in contempt of court and orders the State to pay fines of at least \$2 million per day until the defendants guarantee, to the satisfaction of the court, the Receiver's Capital Construction Program will be fully funded. The motion also asks Federal District Court Judge Thelton Henderson to encumber any investment earnings in the state's Surplus Money Investment Fund and earmark the earnings for use by the Receiver for his projects until a suitable, stable source of funding is found.

The Receiver is also seeking to force Mr. Chiang to submit a plan within the next three days that would provide funding from the state treasury to pay for the Receiver's immediate funding needs.

The hearing on the motion is scheduled for September 22, 2008. The Receiver has said he is still attempting to reach a settlement with the defendants before that date.

Mr. Chiang stated in a press release that he is unable to expend funds from the Treasury unless they are appropriated by the Legislature or there is a court order compelling payment.

While I do support Mr. Kelso's efforts to provide the constitutionally-required level of healthcare to our prisoners, rest assured I will vote to block any expenditure that includes the construction of a prison hospital in Ventura County.

I, along with many of the elected officials across Ventura County, remain adamantly opposed to the conversion of the Ventura CYA facility into a prison hospital.

I have been holding a series of meetings with local elected officials in order to form a united coalition to pursue the best legal remedies.

As of yet, Mr. Kelso has taken no definitive steps to move forward with the environmental review process at the Camarillo site, but it is anticipated to begin sometime in August, according to a discussion he had with me and others last month.

When that happens, we will be ready and unified in our efforts to oppose the prison hospital.